



News Release

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Media Contact:
Lena Dibble
Tobacco Prevention Program
801-538-6917

New Surgeon General's Report on Secondhand Smoke Confirms Significance of Utah Indoor Clean Air Act

(Salt Lake City, UT) — Utah health advocates said a new U.S. Surgeon General's report on secondhand smoke leaves absolutely no doubt that secondhand smoke is a serious health hazard and confirms the passing of recent amendments to the Utah Indoor Clean Air Act banning smoking in all indoor work and public places, as necessary to protect everyone's right to breathe clean air.

The Surgeon General's report, released today in Washington, DC, summarizes the scientific evidence that has led every major public health organization and scientific authority to conclude that secondhand smoke isn't just an annoyance, but a serious health hazard. The report affirms that there is no longer any scientific debate that secondhand smoke, which contains more than 4,000 chemicals, causes serious diseases, including lung cancer, heart disease and respiratory illnesses such as bronchitis and asthma, and that the only way to protect everyone from these health hazards is to completely eliminate exposure. The report makes it clear that other approaches, such as smoking and non-smoking sections and ventilation technology, do not eliminate exposure to secondhand smoke.

This is the most comprehensive scientific report ever produced on the health harms of secondhand smoke and marks the first time the Surgeon General has issued a report on secondhand smoke since 1986. Related materials can be found at www.cdc.gov/tobacco/.

"The Surgeon General's report is the most highly respected scientific authority on smoking and health, and this report's conclusion makes it clear—there is no question that secondhand smoke causes serious disease and death," said Heather Borski of the Utah Department of Health's Tobacco Prevention and Control Program. "Utah legislators have done the right thing by

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approving a smoke-free workplace law that protects all workers and customers from secondhand smoke. There is no reason why anyone should have to breathe the toxins in secondhand smoke while at work or as a consequence of patronizing a restaurant, bar or other venue.”

In addition to Utah, 13 other states, Washington, DC and Puerto Rico have passed statewide smoke-free workplace laws that include restaurants and bars. The states are: California, Colorado (effective July 1), Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii (effective Nov. 16), Maine, Massachusetts, Montana, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont and Washington (the Montana and Utah laws extend to bars in 2009, while the DC law does so on January 1, 2007). Two other states – Florida and Idaho – have smoke-free laws that exempt only stand-alone bars. Hundreds of cities and counties across the United States have also taken action, as have whole countries including Ireland, England (effective 2007), Scotland, Uruguay, Norway, New Zealand, Sweden, Italy, Bhutan and Bermuda.

The evidence that smoke-free laws protect health without harming business is prevalent in dozens of studies and hard economic data that have shown smoke-free laws can actually have a positive impact. Some of the strongest evidence comes from New York City, where a report found that, in the year after the city's comprehensive smoke-free law took effect March 30, 2003, business receipts for restaurants and bars increased, employment rose, the number of liquor licenses increased, virtually all establishments are complying with the law, and the vast majority of New Yorkers support the law. There is also growing evidence that smoke-free laws can save money. A study released in August 2005 by the Society of Actuaries found that secondhand smoke costs our country \$10 billion a year in health care bills, lost wages and other costs.

A fact sheet on the evidence that smoke-free laws do not harm business can be found at:

www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0144.pdf.

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The mission of the Utah Department of Health is to protect the public's health through preventing avoidable illness, injury, disability and premature death; assuring access to affordable, quality health care; and promoting healthy lifestyles.